CIA Prober Defends Warren Panel Views

Washington, D. C. – AP – David W. Belin, staff director for the Rockefeller Commission on CIA domestic spying and once a counsel on the staff of the Warren Commission, is adamant about the claim by comedian and civil rights activist Dick Gregory that the CIA was involved in the assassination of President John Kennedy. There is absolutely no evidence for it, he said in an interview.

Belin, 46, of Des Moines, Iowa, was interviewed in his third floor office across from the White House, where he says he and his staff of 10 have been spending up to 80 hours a week in their probe of the CIA.

Excerpts from the interview:

Q. Do you think there would be any purpose served in reopening the investigation of the assassination of John Kennedy?

A. There is no doubt in my mind that Lee Harvey Oswald was the assassin and the sole assassin of President Kennedy. I think the thing that perhaps surprises me most of all about this entire area is the widespread ignorance on the part of the American people on this subject and their widespread gullibility.

The sensationalists are having their day in court and they're having it in front of the television screens, and all I can say is that I believe this is one area that I know more about than anyone else in the world and there's no doubt in my mind as to what the truth is.

Q. But that doesn't answer the question whether the investigation should be reopened. Even if you're convinced, wouldn't you like to have the rest of the United States be as convinced as you are?

A. I would very much like to have the rest of the United States convinced of the truth because I believe that the Kennedy assassination was a turning point on our nation's history. I don't believe that reopening the Kennedy assassination investigation would necessarily contribute to that.

There is one major problem and that's the fact that the testimony of witnesses is always more reliable the closer that it is to the actual scene of the event. You are much more able to describe accurately what took place last month than you are to describe what took place 10 years ago. I do think that there is one matter which remains not a matter of public record which should be a matter of public record, and that is the autopsy photographs and X-rays of President Kennedy which the Kennedy family has withheld from public inspection.

Q. If you are so convinced, why then do you spend 12 hours or have your staff spend 12 hours with Dick Gregory?

A. We will meet with anyone (who) says that they have evidence that is relevant to the course of our investigation. They've claimed that the CIA was involved in a plot to assassinate President Kennedy. I would have to tell you that there has been no credible evidence that's come forward to this commission since I've been here that in any way shows that the CIA was involved in any manner with a plot to assassinate President Kennedy.

David W. Belin